

PRESIDENT'S MEETING WITH KHRUSHCHEV  
Vienna, June 3-4, 1961

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May 23, 1961

Scope Paper

I. U.S. Objectives

A. To improve the prospects of finding an acceptable and workable basis for improving relations with the Soviet Union.

B. To impress on Khrushchev our capacity and resolve to resist Soviet and Communist encroachments if he is unwilling to seek a satisfactory basis for better relations and to stress the dangers attendant on continued, sharp confrontations between the two countries.

C. To communicate to Khrushchev the President's understanding and grasp of the world situation, in an historical as well as immediate sense, and his capacity and intent to influence the course of world events.

D. To gain a clearer understanding of Khrushchev as a man and of Soviet policy and intentions.

II. Khrushchev

A. Khrushchev will probably seek -- directly or indirectly -- to convey and gain acceptance of the following view of the world situation:

1. The world is divided into two power systems, the communist and the capitalist.

2. The communist system is firmly established beyond challenge in the bloc countries and the processes of political change can take place only in the non-communist countries.

3. The balance of world power has shifted and is shifting toward the communist system, the Sino-Soviet bloc.

4. The Soviet Union does not wish to advance that process by war, that is, a major global nuclear war.

5. Neither can the capitalist powers afford to inhibit that process by resort to war.

6. The capitalist powers must recognize the "realities" of

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the world situation, i.e., the power shift toward the bloc, and accommodate themselves to changes which accord with the "will of the people," i.e., Laos, Cuba, the Congo.

7. Part of this "realistic" approach requires the recognition that no significant decision on international questions anywhere in the world or in international bodies can be taken without accommodating the views of the Soviet Union.

8. The process of contention between the systems can be carried on by all means short of war, i.e., overt war across international borders, without the risk of global war and without serious effect on U.S.-Soviet relations or the prospects of disarmament.

9. Those relations should be improved; there are no important bilateral differences impeding them; but the U.S. should remove its discriminatory trade policies and withdraw from foreign bases threatening the USSR.

10. The Soviet Union is seriously interested in disarmament but not control and inspection systems without actual disarmament; its proposals are comprehensive and control provisions could be worked out if the Western powers accepted the Soviet proposals.

11. The problems of Berlin and a peace treaty are urgent and should be solved.

B. Khrushchev probably is confident that the Communist chances in the long run are good. However, he has a healthy respect and probably a reasonably accurate understanding of the military power and productive capacity of the Western nations, particularly the United States. He, therefore, has little taste for risky adventures.

He believes that there is still room for steady Communist gains. This belief stems in part from his doubt that the Western powers have the will or resolve to translate their resources into the elements of power sufficient to cope with the bloc and his doubt that they can find the basis for building effective non-communist political institutions in the under-developed countries. He, consequently, is led to the conclusion that by alternating pressure and overtures he can make the gains at the negotiating table and by shielding local Communist advances with Soviet power. He is also constantly conscious of the specter of growing Communist Chinese power and this gives him added reason to maintain his communication with the Western powers

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and to explore the terms of a possible accommodation with them.

There are indications that he is sufficiently concerned over the risks of nuclear war and sufficiently convinced of Soviet political capabilities abroad to be seriously interested in disarmament. However, he finds political capital in playing on the disarmament issue and has apparently not thought through the problems associated with disarmament in any meaningful way. He, therefore, has probably not reached conclusions on the terms under which various disarmament measures would be acceptable.

He will undoubtedly press hard his position on Berlin and a peace treaty with East Germany and will try to get some form of commitment to negotiate the Berlin question.

This meeting itself gratifies him and he may extend the President an invitation to visit the Soviet Union if the talks go reasonably well from his point of view.

### III. Tactics

In an exchange of this type, particularly with so outspoken a leader as Khrushchev, it is not practicable to expect that the course of the talks can be charted in advance. However, the total content of the President's remarks to Khrushchev should convey the clear impression that essentially two broad alternatives are open to the Soviet Union. It can seek to encroach on the free world. In this event, force will surely be met with counter-force, the costly and dangerous arms race will be continued and probably accelerated and the risk of nuclear war will probably become acute. Alternatively, it can seek an accommodation of legitimate Soviet national interests with ours, reduce the intensity level of our confrontation, open up the prospect of arms limitation with its attendant benefits and broaden the area of mutually profitable cooperative endeavor. It should be borne in mind that current Soviet foreign policy which Khrushchev will espouse presupposes the charting of a course profitable to the Soviet Union between these two alternatives.

The tone of our approach should not be ultimative. It can emerge from the discussion of our approach to the vital problems of U.S.-Soviet relations as the realistic recognition of the logical course of events. We keep well to the forefront of the discussion our earnest desire and our readiness to build a basis for constructive relations and our conviction that this course is in the Soviet as well as our national

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interest. But we make it clear that our patience has already been severely tested and that we are determined that there be no Soviet illusion concerning our intent and capacity to resist Communist encroachments by whatever means are needed.

Perhaps one convincing way to make the point is to stress the urgent need and our most serious desire for prompt agreements on disarmament measures and to insist throughout the talks that all other questions, including Berlin and Germany specifically, are secondary to this one. It should be made explicit that this does not mean that disarmament talks can proceed hopefully regardless of the state of political relations. On the contrary, it should be stressed that the acceptance, whether formal or tacit, of reasonably orderly and peaceful procedures for affecting political change and protecting national and human rights is fundamentally necessary to an atmosphere in which disarmament talks could be promising. Exchanges on this point will afford ample opportunity to convey our determination to meet Communist incursions and to articulate our concept of a peaceful world community within which legitimate Soviet national interests can continuously be accommodated or negotiated.

The talks might well be opened with a discussion of the nuclear testing talks. This is a subject in which we have an immediate interest and a current tactical advantage; it serves to emphasize our interest in disarmament, and the Soviet tripartite proposals are both a matter of important concern to us and a favorable ground on which to criticize the Soviet world outlook and the dual nature of Soviet foreign policy.

The President's exposition and criticism of the Soviet world outlook and the reality of Communist rule within individual countries will inevitably call forth a spirited if not heated rejoinder. Khrushchev's reply will doubtless be lengthy. In order to preserve time during the second day for an exposition of our view of a constructive world order, the discussion of matters more capable of solution and to reserve the possibility of ending the talks on a hopeful note, this sensitive topic should probably be brought up toward the end of the first day's conversation.

The second day would proceed from the discussion of divergences in beliefs to more immediate problems of courses of action: disarmament negotiations, the possibility of negotiations on Germany and

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Berlin, the provision for peaceful transition in the newly independent areas, and, if it is appropriate, cooperative endeavors in the fields of science and exchanges.

#### IV. Invitation to the Soviet Union

The President might say that he appreciates the invitation and would welcome the opportunity to visit the Soviet Union. Both he and Khrushchev appear to have heavy schedules for the immediate future. An improved outlook for U.S.-Soviet relations would be a desirable background for such a visit. As Khrushchev visited here in 1959, there would appear to be no need for a reciprocal invitation to him at this time.

#### V. Communique

It will be difficult, if not impossible, to avoid a joint communique. A draft communique which seeks to exclude language the Soviets might favor but which we wish to avoid has been prepared as a starter. The final communique will have to be drafted toward the end of the talks.

